

‘ what then will you be the better for my death ? The youth’s heart relented, and he cheerfully set the simple grasshopper at liberty. You, great king, have now that innocent creature before you, there is nothing I can pretend to but my voice, which I have ever employed, as far as my abilities would suffer me, in the service of mankind.’

*Cræsus* was so moved with *Æsop*’s modesty and prudence, that he not only gave him his life, but promised to grant him any other reasonable request. When *Æsop* replied, ‘ Suffer me, with the utmost veneration, gratitude and respect, humbly to implore your majesty’s favour for my countrymen the *Samians*.’ The generosity of this petition highly pleased the king, who readily granted his request, and admiring him for his wisdom and virtue, treated him with the greatest kindness. *Æsop*, however, soon after returned to *Samos*, with the news of peace, where he was welcomed by all possible testimonies of joy and gratitude ; and the *Samians* even erected a statue to his honour.

*Æsop* afterwards returned to *Cræsus*, for whose sake he composed many of the fables that have in his name been handed down to posterity.

posterity. He staid at his court a considerable time, and at length being desirous of seeing *Babylon*, *Cræsus* gave him letters of recommendation to *Labyntus* king of the *Babylonians*.

*Æsop*’s curiosity induced him to take *Greece* in his way, for the sake of conversing with the seven wise men, whose reputation was at that time spread over the earth. There he found at *Corinth*, with several of their disciples, where *Periander* treated them all at a villa near the city. *Æsop* was on this occasion highly pleased with their conversation, for the entertainment was philosophical and agreeable, and among other discourses, they gave their opinions upon what was the most excellent form of government, when *Æsop* pleaded for a limited monarchy, and the rest for a commonwealth.

On *Æsop*’s arriving at *Babylon*, he was received in a very favourable manner by king *Labyntus*. It was customary in those days, for princes to propose trials of skill in the resolving of difficult questions, when he who gave the most satisfactory answers, obtained the prize. These contests gave *Æsop* frequent oppor-